

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 BIB-01 CU-02 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /075 W

----- 094256

R 291350Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5423

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1019

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: SOVIET FILM ON SECOND WORLD WAR AND OTHER MATTERS

1. EVENING OF APRIL 24 MY WIFE AND I WERE INVITED TO FILM SHOWING AT SOVIET EMBASSY'S LOCAL VERSION OF ST. CATHERINE'S HALL. NOTHING ON INVITATION HINTED WHAT OUR EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT WOULD BE, BUT AS WE RECENTLY INVITED SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND WIFE TO SHOWING OF "THE GREAT GATSBY" WE ASSUMED PROGRAM WOULD BE CULTURAL WITH USUAL MASSES OF SIMPERING PSEUDO FOLK DANCERS AND STUDIOUSLY ARCHED EYED BALALAIKA PLAYERS.

2. ALONG WITH A HUNDRED OR SO OTHER GUESTS (ALTHOUGH THE ENTIRE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WAS INVITED I WAS THE ONLY WESTERN AMBASSADOR PRESENT) WE WERE UNPLEASANTLY SURPRISED WHEN THE FILM WHOSE TITLE AS BEST I COULD MAKE IT OUT WAS "EFFORTS FOR PEACE" TURNED OUT TO BE A SLICK TECHNICOLOR CHRONICLE IN ARABIC NOT ONLY OF THE SOVIET UNION'S "GREAT VICTORY" OVER THE NAZI-FACIST HORDES OF WORLD WAR II BUT ALSO OF SOVIET STRUGGLES FOR PEACE AGAINST THE NEFARIOUS DESIGNS OF THE AMERICAN AND NATO IMPERIALIST DURING THE COLD WAR. THE FILM INCLUDED SCENES OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN VIET NAM AND IN THE ARAB/ ISRAELI WARS ALONG WITH DISPARAGING COMMENTS ON THE

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INFLUENCE OF REACTIONARIES, ZIONISTS AND RACISTS IN

THE UNITED STATES. TOWARDS THE END, THE FILM DID  
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOME CHANGES WERE DISCERNIBLE IN  
US POLICY BUT THIS WAS PRIMARILY DUE TO THE EFFORTS OF  
THE SOVIETS UNDER BREZHNEV FOLLOWING LENIN'S POLICY OF  
PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE.

3. THE SHOWING WOULD DOUBTLESS HAVE CONTINUED WELL  
BEYOND THE TWO-AND-A-HALF HOURS TO WHICH WE WERE SUBJECTED  
HAD THE PROJECTOR NOT SUDDENLY BROKEN DOWN, NO  
DOUBT DUE TO THE WEIGHT OF THE HISTORICAL DISTORTIONS IT  
HAD TO CARRY. I DEBATED WITH MYSELF DURING THE PRESENTATION  
WHETHER TO WALK OUT, BUT DECIDED THAT IF I DID IT  
WOULD ONLY DRAMATIZE TO THE SOVIETS AND OTHER GUESTS  
THAT THE FILM HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MAKING ITS PROPAGANDA  
POINTS. MOREOVER, FROM WHAT I COULD TELL THE HARD-SELL  
APPROACH OF THE FILM DID NOT IMPRESS THE YEMENIS IN THE  
AUDIENCE, MANY OF WHOM APPEARED HALF OR FULLY ASLEEP DURING  
THE SHOWING. SO, I DECIDED TO SIT IT OUT RATHER THAN TO PROVIDE  
AEDLESS EXCITEMENT FOR AN OTHERWISE SOPORIFIC EVENING.

4. ON DEPARTING, I THANKED THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON  
BEHALF OF ALL THE AMERICANS WHO FOUGHT AND DIED IN THE  
SECOND WORLD WAR FOR AT LEAST HAVING BRIEFLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT  
FACT IN THE FILM. MY SARCASM MUST HAVE GOTTEN THROUGH THE  
ARABIC TO RUSSIAN TRANSLATION, BECAUSE THE AMBASSADOR REDDENED  
IN EMBARRASSMENT AND SHEEPISHLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT OUR PEOPLES  
HAD, INDEED, FOUGHT TOGETHER AND THEN BEGAN MUMBLING SOMETHING  
ABOUT FRIENDSHIP AND DETENTE. I DID NOT PURUSE THE CONVERSATION.

5. I ASSUME THIS FILM IS BEING SHOWN ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD  
WAR. I BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD ALERT OUR POSES  
AROUND THE WORLD TO THIS FILM AND RECOMMEND TO THEM  
WHAT ACTION MISSION OFFICERS SHOULD TAKE IF THEY FIND  
THEMSELVES PRESENT AT SUCH A SHOWING WITHOUT PRIOR  
WARNING. PERHAPS, I AM TOO MUCH A CHILD OF THE FIFTIES  
AND HAVE OVER-REACTED TO THE CONTENTS OF THIS FILM  
WHICH REMINDED ME OF AN OLD ARAB SAYING, "FIRST,  
YOU SPAT IN MY FACE AND THEN YOU TRIED TO CARESS THE  
SPITTLE AWAY". IN ANY CASE IF THIS FILM IS AN EXAMPLE  
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OF HOW THE SOVIETS PLAN TO WORK FOR US/USSR DETENTE,  
GOD HELP US FROM FUTURE SOVIET EFFORTS FOR US/USSR  
COOPERATION AND CO-EXISTENCE.  
SCOTES

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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